

## **Relationship of SEDAR to the Councils and Council Committees.**

[Extracted from SEDAR Description and Background, May2012]

SEDAR attempts to co-exist within the existing framework of Council and Commission Committees and advisory bodies. A primary goal of SEDAR is to provide best available science for consideration by the Council and their advisory bodies. Nothing in these guidelines is intended to prohibit any Council or Commission from pursuing its own chosen process of technical review and advice.

Each Council may review the products of SEDAR stock assessments in accordance with its rules and procedures. Each Council is allowed latitude in determining how SEDAR assessment products are presented to the Council and its technical and advisory bodies.

For the Interstate Commissions and state agencies in the Southeast, SEDAR provides a source of independent peer review of stock assessment products.

### **6.1 Council & Committees**

Council technical advisory body members (including Science & Statistical Committees as well as various additional committees devoted to particular areas such as stock assessment or social and economic issues) are included in Council SEDAR Advisory Pools and appointed to workshops and therefore perform, within the SEDAR process and during SEDAR workshops, functions currently outlined in a number of Council FMPs. This includes producing an assessment report and recommending management and SFA parameters such as ABC, Bmsy, Fmsy, MFMT, and MSST as necessary to meet SFA requirements. It is the intention of the Steering Committee that SEDAR reports serve as the required assessment reports to meet council guidelines and mandates, thereby avoiding the need for Council Committees to draft additional separate reports. 23

NOAA General Counsel recommended that Council FMP's and Amendments incorporate the SEDAR process as outlined in these Guidelines as the source of assessment information and SFA criteria. Each Council is given latitude in deciding how SEDAR reports will be reviewed once the SEDAR project is completed and the stock assessment report finalized and submitted.

Separation of responsibility for specific management recommendations between SEDAR panels and Council SSC's and other standing committees is intentional. It is the expressed intent of the SEDAR Steering Committee and the cooperating Councils that no specific management recommendations be included in SEDAR reports. The management related advice provided by SEDAR shall be restricted to recommended values for designated management criteria, recommendations of appropriate management criteria when requested, statements of stock status, and evaluations of the biological effects of past management actions.

### **Role of the SSC**

Council standing Scientific and Statistical Committees, in accordance with Section 302 of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, "assist in the development, collection, and evaluation of such statistical, biological, economic, social, and other scientific information as is relevant to such Council's development and amendment of any fishery management plan". SEDAR Assessment Reports, Review Panel Reports, and supporting documents submitted and prepared during the Workshops are provided to the appropriate Council for SSC review. Specific guidance for SSC review is provided by each Council. Individual Councils may also adapt this requirement to include review and action by their various other technical committees.

Once a SEDAR benchmark is completed it is presented to the appropriate Council SSCs for consideration. The goal of SEDAR is to produce, with involvement of SSC members, AP members, agency staff, and constituents, an assessment which represents the best available science. Therefore, the SSC shall review the report and the process, but is neither expected nor obligated to provide an exhaustive and detailed technical review such as was provided by the SEDAR independent review panel.

During review of the assessment, the SSC may request further evaluation of assessment uncertainties and alternative projection scenarios if deemed necessary to develop required management recommendations. If the SSC determines that a mistake has been made in the assessment model or in any input datasets, and further determines that such mistakes significantly impact the assessment results, in particular the magnitude and direction of required management, the SSC shall prepare a written report for submission to the Council and SEDAR Steering Committee which details (1) the nature of the mistake, including appropriate documentation of the correct information; (2) specific concerns related to the mistake, including the estimated parameters that are affected; and (3) the recommended process and timeline for correction, review, and reconsideration by the SSC.

Upon completion of its review, the SSC shall consider the SEDAR assessment findings and the results of any additional supplementary analyses requested in developing specific management recommendations as obligated under Council procedures and the Magnuson-Stevens Act. Representatives of the analytical team will assist those SSC 24

members assigned to a particular SEDAR assessment project in making a detailed technical presentation of the assessment to the full SSC during the SSC review and recommendations phase.

Once an assessment is presented to the SSC, the SSC is responsible for presenting to their Council their evaluation of the adequacy of the assessment, their interpretation and summary of the assessment methods and findings, and their recommendations regarding appropriate actions. A representative of the SSC shall be responsible for presenting SEDAR assessments to the Council and any standing Council committees as necessary. Councils should consider this responsibility when making appointments to SEDAR workshops, especially the review workshop.

Councils should make every effort to schedule their meetings such that the number of assessment presentations required of the analytical team is minimized. Councils should schedule meetings to accommodate a technical presentation to all of their various technical bodies at once, rather than individual presentations across several meetings of the various bodies. Analytical representatives can be on hand to answer questions when the assessment is presented to the Council, but are not obligated under SEDAR guidelines to lead the presentation.

## **6.2 Interstate Commissions**

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Stock Assessment Committee reviewed the Commission's internal process for conducting stock assessments in relation to SEDAR, and recommended that data workshop and stock assessment workshops become a standard part of the Commission stock assessment process. The additional input that SEDAR provides from both data holders and stakeholders will improve buy-in and transparency from the earliest part of the assessment process. ASMFC technical committees or stock assessment subcommittees conduct assessment workshops with an expanded number of participants. Federal, state, university, industry, and other outside experts are invited to participate in evaluating the data inputs to the model, as well as conducting the assessment model. Assessments prepared through ASMFC may be reviewed by SEDAR Review Workshop Panels.

## **7. Public Participation**

SEDAR is a Council process, and as such, public participation is encouraged. SEDAR meetings are open to the public and advertised by the Councils and through the Federal Register. To clarify the role and nature of public participation, the following is noted on SEDAR workshop agendas: "Public participation during SEDAR workshops is handled similar to current Council technical and committee meetings, in that no formal period of public testimony is scheduled. Instead, the Chair is free to call on the public for comment as necessary and appropriate during workshop deliberations. Written public comment should be submitted in accordance with the guidelines of the host Council". During all workshops, interested parties are permitted to comment on discussion items as the meeting proceeds. The degree of formality typically varies with workshop, with data workshops providing the most. Written comments are handled in accordance with guidelines established by each Council.